

Minutes of the Upper Mississippi River System Environmental Management Program Coordinating Committee

**August 10, 2000
Summer Quarterly Meeting**

**Four Points Hotel Sheraton
Rock Island, Illinois**

Dusty Rhodes of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. on Thursday, August 10, 2000. Other EMP-CC members present were Charlie Wooley (USFWS), Leslie Holland-Bartels (USGS), Marvin Hubbell (IL DNR), Kevin Szcodronski (IA DNR), Steve Johnson (MN DNR), Gordon Farabee (MO DOC), Terry Moe (WI DNR), Dave Carvey (NRCS), and Al Fenedick (US EPA). A complete list of attendees is attached.

Minutes of the May Meeting

Terry Moe moved and Kevin Szcodronski seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2000 EMP-CC meeting as written. The motion carried unanimously.

Announcements

Dusty Rhodes announced that John Blankenship has assumed other responsibilities within Region 3 of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Rhodes introduced Assistant Regional Director Charlie Wooley, who is replacing Blankenship as the Service's representative on the EMP-CC.

Holly Stoerker noted Rhodes' pending retirement. She thanked him for his leadership and presented him with a card conveying the program partners' best wishes for his retirement.

Rhodes also announced a series of changes in Corps leadership. General Ballard retired last week, and President Clinton has nominated General Flowers to replace Ballard as Chief of Engineers. This nomination is subject to Senate confirmation. General Anderson will be leaving MVD in September to assume command of the South Atlantic Division. General Arnold will replace Anderson at MVD. Rhodes also reported that General Fuhrman will be retiring and General Turner will replace him as Deputy Chief of Engineers.

Program Management

FY 00 Fiscal Performance

Leo Foley reported that the EMP's expenditures through June 30 totaled \$9.162 million. This represents approximately 50 percent of the \$18.438 million in total expenditures scheduled for the year. HREP expenditures through June totaled \$4.568 million, compared with scheduled expenditures for the year of \$11.566 million. LTRMP expenditures were \$4.584 million,

compared with annual scheduled expenditures of \$6.748 million. Obligations through the end of June totaled \$6.879 million for HREPs and \$6.555 million for LTRMP. Foley noted that expenditures are a bit behind pace, but expressed confidence in the EMP's fiscal performance prospects for the year. According to Foley, obligation rates are good and current construction activity is high. In response to a question from Steve Johnson, Foley indicated that all items on the LTRMP's original FY 00 overtarget list were funded through transfers earlier in the fiscal year. However, Foley said USGS is reporting some additional overtarget capability. As a result, additional money may be transferred to the LTRMP if the habitat program cannot expend fully.

Terry Moe noted that part of the Pool 11 Islands project was deferred due to funding constraints. He asked whether this work could be advanced if some other HREPs are behind schedule in their expenditures. Foley said he would explore this possibility.

Rhodes emphasized the importance of the EMP's FY 00 fiscal performance. He explained that MVD and the districts were aggressive in seeking to restore cuts that were made to all Corps construction projects and in protecting the EMP from funding recalls. As such, it is essential for the EMP to execute fully. Rhodes urged all program partners to do what they can to ensure full expenditures.

FY 01 Funding Outlook

Foley noted that the FY 01 energy and water appropriations bill (H.R. 4733) is pending. The President requested \$18.0 million for the EMP, while the House-passed bill includes \$21.0 million. The Senate Appropriations Committee has approved \$17.0 million. Foley said the \$17.0 million level would result in cuts to the LTRMP and delays in some HREP projects. He estimated that the \$18.0 million level would not necessitate cuts or delays. At \$21.0 million, the EMP could start to gear up for potential future funding increases. According to Foley, the Corps' plan under any of these funding scenarios would be to deduct savings and slippage and administrative costs from the total appropriations amount. The balance would then be allocated between HREPs (68.6%) and LTRMP (31.4%). The allocation of HREP funds among the districts would tentatively be based on the existing formula (i.e., MVP 35%, MVR 40%, and MVS 25%). (See attached for the details of this approach).

In response to a question from Moe, Foley noted that WRDA 99 authorizes the Corps to transfer up to 20 percent of the LTRMP or HREP allocation to the other component in any given year. Foley observed that it could be difficult to achieve a consensus among the program partners to protect one side of the program at the expense of the other in the event FY 01 funding falls below \$18.0 million. Rhodes said the MVD Commander would seek input from the program partners before allocating funding between the two components if the final appropriation falls below the target baseline.

MVD Directives re Implementation Guidance

Rhodes reported that General Anderson has not yet issued directives regarding the May 12 EMP implementation guidance from Corps headquarters. According to Rhodes, aspects of the May guidance that affect immediate program implementation, such as delegation of authority, are being implemented. Other provisions, such as those relating to the independent technical

advisory committee and the public involvement strategy, may be affected by pending legislation and thus are being deferred at present. Rhodes specifically cited proposed Corps reform legislation as potentially complicating implementation of the headquarters EMP guidance.

Partnership Issues

Corps' Response to Service's Funding Request

Leo Foley noted that Marv Moriarty's February 3, 2000 letter made three requests to the Corps:

- 1) transfer EMP funds to support the Service's HREP planning role,
- 2) assist with rehabilitation of damaged or defective projects after project transfer, and
- 3) provide O&M funds.

General Anderson's June 12 reply expresses the Corps' willingness to transfer money to the Service for specific tasks that support HREP program management. Citing lack of authority, Anderson's letter declines to provide funds for major rehabilitation or HREP O&M. It does leave open the possibility, on a case-by-case basis, of using EMP funds to address design deficiencies that are discovered after project completion.

Scopes of Work for Service Tasks

Foley reported that he is working with Dan Stinnett on the transfer of funding from the Corps to the Service for various HREP management tasks. Foley said he anticipates that the Corps will issue individual work orders for the Service to prepare Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Reports (CARs) for habitat projects. Construction management support for projects on refuge lands and plan formulation support for projects on refuge and non-refuge lands will likely be done under annual work orders. Transfer of funds to the Service for HREP program management will be initiated in FY 01. Foley said the state partners will have an opportunity to review the scopes for this work before they are finalized. He estimated that the SOWs will be circulated for review in September.

Marvin Hubbell asked how the Corps plans to budget for the Service's program management tasks. While a final decision has not been made, Foley said he anticipates that plan formulation and construction management costs will be deducted off of the top of the HREP allocation. The costs of CARs will likely be charged against individual projects. Gordon Farabee asked how the Service will be involved in plan formulation for non-refuge projects. Foley explained that funding for plan formulation on non-refuge projects will cover the Service's costs for activities such as attending meetings and providing input on National Environmental Policy Act questions. Foley said that both the Corps and the sponsor state will benefit from the Service's plan formulation work on non-refuge projects.

Responses to States' Joint Letters

Dusty Rhodes said the Corps only recently received the states' joint letter to General Van Winkle and thus has not yet prepared a response. Terry Moe said Wisconsin plans to urge

members of the Mississippi River Commission to support increased EMP appropriations. As part of this effort, Wisconsin will provide the MRC with copies of the states' letter to Van Winkle.

Marvin Hubbell asked about the status of the Service's response to the states' letter to Director Clark. Charlie Wooley said the director's office is reviewing a draft response and will be responding shortly.

Jon Duyvejonck asked whether the Corps might be able to fund HREP O&M on refuges as a reasonable and prudent alternative (RPA) under the Endangered Species Act. Rhodes noted that the Corps can implement RPAs under various authorities. Rhodes said he believes that the authority for each individual program would govern the construction and O&M of any RPA implemented under that program. Under this logic, the EMP's O&M requirements would apply to all HREPs, including those that contribute to RPAs. Rhodes acknowledged that this is a complicated issue and said the Corps' attorneys will be reviewing the question.

Habitat Needs Assessment

Mike Thompson reported that the HNA Technical Report is approximately 95 percent complete, with work remaining in the sections on migratory birds and desired future conditions. He estimated that the public involvement effort is about 90 percent complete and the HNA Summary Report is approximately 80 percent complete.

Bob Clevensline reported that a series of 10 public involvement focus group meetings was completed on August 4. Focus group participants were self-selected from among several hundred individuals who received invitations to the meetings. They included representatives of environmental, navigation, and agricultural interests as well as individual landowners and members of the general public. Employees of state and federal agencies were asked not to participate in the focus groups. Each meeting was limited to 12 participants and included a heterogeneous mix. Participants were given a brief overview of the HNA and then asked to discuss their understanding of the assessment, desired future conditions for the river, and preferences regarding future involvement in the HNA and the EMP more broadly.

Clevensline briefly summarized some of the major points emerging from the focus groups. According to Clevensline, participants generally reported understanding the basic approach used for the HNA and found it to be reasonable and logical. A number of people said there was too much information presented in too little time and suggested that more background materials be provided in advance of the sessions. While some participants said there was too much detail, others suggested that there was not enough information. Overall, participants said they preferred the focus groups to an open microphone public meeting format. With regard to future involvement in the EMP, people expressed interest in being involved at all levels of the program. In response to a question from Gordon Farabee, Clevensline said people on the northern part of the UMRS generally seemed to have a greater understanding of the EMP than those further downstream. Farabee attributed this, at least in part, to the lack of HREPs on the Open River.

Thompson outlined the following remaining steps for the first iteration of the HNA:

- Distribute draft Overview/Summary Report to the EMP-CC (8/28/00)
- Comments on the draft Overview/Summary Report due (9/6/00)
- Distribute final draft Overview/Summary Report, with layout, to the EMP-CC (9/12/00)
- Comments on the final draft Overview/Summary Report due (9/15/00)
- Final HNA draft submitted for proofs (9/19/00)
- Final HNA draft submitted to MVD (9/30/00)
- Distribution of final HNA Overview/Summary Report and Technical Report (12/00)

Clevenstine acknowledged the hard work of Chuck Theiling, Jason Rohweder, Tim Fox, and Hank DeHaan and thanked them for their contributions to the HNA.

Thompson said the report has been coordinated with partner agencies through the HNA Technical Committee and said he anticipates that remaining comments will be primarily editorial in nature. Marvin Hubbell cautioned that program partners will likely want to offer more than editorial comments on some aspects of the report. Specifically he asked what recommendations the report will include regarding desired future conditions and future public involvement, noting that these are important issues on which Illinois would likely offer substantive comments. Other state EMP-CC members also voiced concerns regarding the limited review time under the schedule outlined by Thompson. Dusty Rhodes emphasized that the September 30, 2000 deadline for the HNA is established in law, but said that the Corps is prepared to exercise its management discretion if the assessment is not ready for submission to MVD by that date.

Barb Naramore noted that the schedule does not include any provision for public review and comment. According to Naramore, participants in the public focus groups expressed some frustration with their limited input on the HNA and the EMP more generally. She recommended that the HNA report be circulated for public comment. Rhodes said time constraints preclude a public comment period if the report is to be submitted to MVD by September 30. He said the Corps would instead solicit public input on the version that is published after MVD review and committed to revising the assessment as needed based on that public input. Rhodes said the published report will describe this plan for public review.

In response to a request from Hubbell, Thompson and Clevenstine said they would distribute the desired future conditions section of the draft report to the states as soon as possible. Moe asked how information from the HNA public involvement process will be used to help inform the HREP prioritization process. Thompson noted that public input was quite diverse. Clevenstine said he would report on the substance of that input at the next EMP-CC meeting. Dan McGuinness urged that the HNA summary report describe the next steps for public input on the first iteration of the HNA and public involvement in the EMP.

Moe asked how the first iteration HNA will be used in HREP prioritization. Leo Foley emphasized that the first HNA will not identify a specific list of habitat projects. However, he expressed optimism that it will prove to be a useful tool in identifying critical habitat needs during pool planning and the identification and design of individual projects. Moe said he

would like to discuss the issue further, including what weight will be given to the HNA, particularly in the system-level ecological evaluation of projects.

Jim Harrison reiterated the Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Area Commission's objections to the use of focus groups as part of the HNA public involvement process. He described focus groups as selective and exclusionary and said commissioners were concerned that interested members of the public did not have an opportunity to participate. Harrison emphasized that the Boundary Area Commission supports the EMP and the HNA, but is very concerned with the process employed in the HNA. According to Harrison, citizens primarily want to be involved with the EMP at the local, individual project level.

New GIS Tools for HREP Planning

Leslie Holland-Bartels reported that UMESC staff have made several significant improvements to the HNA Query Tool, incorporating programming advances and new modeling software. According to Holland-Bartels, these updates allow users to draw on more data sets in assessing habitat suitability, thereby generating more accurate estimates of habitat quantity and location. As an example, she noted that the original HNA Query Tool clearly over-predicted paddlefish habitat. Models of habitat suitability that consider bathymetric and flow conditions yield far more accurate predictions, as evidenced by comparisons with fisheries monitoring data. Tim Fox demonstrated the enhanced tool, showing how it has been used to predict habitat suitability for waterfowl in the Pool 8 Islands Phase III area. A 3-d model uses bathymetric data to provide refined habitat predictions, which are then compared with observed flock locations. Holland-Bartels said such applications are currently limited by lack of data, particularly by the lack of systemic data for key parameters, including bathymetry and flow.

Terry Moe observed that the enhanced Query Tool is quite helpful in informing the public about proposed habitat projects. Holland-Bartels concurred and also highlighted the tool's usefulness in facilitating coordination and dialog between biologists and engineers involved in HREP design. She noted that there are many potential users of the tool. Jason Rohweder explained that the GIS data and Query Tool will be available via CD and UMESC's ftp site. Holland-Bartels said UMESC will develop a fact sheet about the tool, including information on how to access it. In response to a question from Gordon Farabee, Holland-Bartels said UMESC is working with the St. Louis District to obtain the district's bathymetric data for the Open River. Rohweder indicated that there are some format differences that have delayed use of this data in the Query Tool.

Moe emphasized the importance of coordination between UMESC, with its data and analysis tools, and the Corps' districts, which have the lead for HREP planning. Holland-Bartels agreed and reported that UMESC has already taken initial steps to coordinate with the districts. She stressed that the districts and other potential users will need to become self-sufficient with the tool, noting that UMESC does not have the resources to provide extensive support. Scott Whitney said he anticipates there will be a series of GIS outreach and training workshops to ensure that personnel in the Corps, the states, and the Service have the skills needed to use the Query Tool effectively. Farabee reported that Missouri and the St. Louis District have scheduled a September meeting to discuss GIS coordination. He invited USGS to participate in the meeting.

HREP Prioritization

Leo Foley displayed a flowchart depicting the May 1 draft HREP prioritization framework. He summarized major comments he has received on the draft framework, including recommendations to delay finalizing the framework until after the first iteration of the HNA is complete. Foley noted that several people also asked about the composition of the System Ecological Team. Per General Anderson's directive, the MVD Commander will approve the prioritization framework before it is implemented. While the MVR has not yet formally submitted the framework to MVD for approval, Foley said the division has provided informal feedback and has not suggested any specific changes.

Foley noted that MVP and MVR already have groups in place (i.e., the Fish and Wildlife Work Group and the Fish and Wildlife Interagency Committee) that can function as the Stage I District Ecological Teams proposed in the draft framework. He said MVS is in the process of developing a similar group. Foley reviewed the process he anticipates under the new HREP prioritization framework. As a first step, he said he expects each of the District Ecological Teams will develop pool plans that will identify objectives and opportunities for each pool. These plans will not be specific to the EMP or any other single program. Based on criteria that they have developed, the district teams will then use these pool plans, the HNA, and other tools to review and prioritize potential HREPs. The district teams will forward their lists of prioritized HREPs to the Stage II System Ecological Team. Foley said there are many perspectives on the composition and duties of the system team and said he plans to consult with various EMP partners on these issues. He suggested that the system team should include scientists from both within and beyond the region who have expertise in ecology, hydrology, geomorphology, water quality, hydrogeology, and river engineering. Foley explained that, once the System Ecological Team is established, its members will be asked to develop criteria for prioritizing the HREPs submitted by the district teams.

In response to a question from Dick Steinbach, Dusty Rhodes said there is no link between the draft HREP prioritization framework and the independent technical advisory committee called for in the EMP reauthorization. However, Rhodes observed that proposed Corps reform legislation, the independent technical advisory committee, and the HREP prioritization process all have the potential to affect the EMP. He explained that the Corps is anxious to ensure coordination among any of these initiatives that move forward. For this reason, MVD is delaying action on the independent technical advisory committee and requiring division approval of the prioritization process.

Steve Johnson noted that the Fish and Wildlife Work Group (FWWG) MVP has prioritized proposed HREPs based on biological factors and then forwarded its list to the River Resources Forum (RRF), which has considered policy and administrative issues. In response to a question from Johnson, Foley explained that the Stage III Program Planning Team, comprised primarily of EMP-CC members, is tasked with administrative and policy review under the draft framework. Terry Moe expressed concern that the review currently conducted at the district-level by the RRF is too detailed for Stage III. He said this detailed review should be done before projects are advanced beyond Stage I. Foley clarified that the Stage III administrative and policy review will not necessarily be done at EMP-CC meetings. Barb Naramore noted that the draft prioritization framework specifically indicates that it is not intended to alter the relationship between the FWWG and the RRF. Thus, the framework would not preclude the

RRF from reviewing the FWWG's project list before that list is forwarded to the System Ecological Team.

Moe expressed concern with Foley's description of the HNA as "a primary tool used to determine [habitat] needs that will be addressed" [See issue write-up in August meeting packet.] Foley acknowledged the first iteration of the HNA has many limitations and explained that the goal is for the HNA eventually to become a primary tool. He agreed with Moe that the HNA does not yet support such use.

In answer to a question from Jeff Stein, Foley indicated that MVR plans to submit the HREP prioritization framework to MVD in September 2000, at the same time it forwards the HNA report. This will allow the division to consider the two documents simultaneously. Rhodes said the Corps will not act on the independent technical advisory committee language while the Corps' FY 01 appropriations bill and the 2000 WRDA are pending before Congress because of the potential for Corps reform language in both bills. He said MVD also wants to have the HREP prioritization framework established before it considers the technical advisory committee. Stein said he did not see how the proposed Corps reform legislation would affect the EMP, noting that it would establish review requirements for large and/or controversial projects. As such, Stein said there does not appear to be any need to delay action on the EMP independent technical advisory committee. Rhodes declined to comment on the specifics of any Corps reform language, noting that there are several proposals circulating.

Marvin Hubbell asked how HREP planning starts will be initiated under the prioritization process. Foley said he expects a fair number of new projects will be proposed in FY 01 and planning will be started on some of those projects, based on their priority. However, as additional insights are gained and more projects are proposed in FY 02, Foley said he anticipates that there will be some reprioritization of projects. Hubbell said the states need clarification from the Service regarding how to proceed with potential HREPs on refuge lands. Charlie Wooley said he hopes the Service will respond to the states' letter on this issue within the next few weeks.

Foley reported that Don Powell has developed a draft fact sheet template for new HREPs. Moe and Johnson expressed concern that the draft template appears to require significantly more information than does the current fact sheet format. They noted that this could increase the time and money required to develop fact sheets. Hubbell endorsed the goal of having more information in the fact sheets. He said it is critical for project proponents to consider carefully the items covered in the draft template, particularly project goals and objectives. Gordon Farabee concurred that the revised fact sheet would require more work but said he thought the effort would be worthwhile. Foley said he envisions that the Corps districts would contribute a substantial amount of the information required for the new fact sheets. He said the Corps will consult further with program partners prior to finalizing the fact sheet format.

Fish and Wildlife Work Group Pool Planning

Tim Schlagenhaft described the FWWG's pilot pool planning initiative, which he said is an effort by river managers on the MVP portion of the UMR to articulate a common vision for the river. He explained that the FWWG's pool plans will not be exclusive to the EMP or any particular program and will not specify a timeframe for implementing the managers' vision.

Schlagenhaft presented overheads showing the FWWG's pilot planning effort for Pool 5. He said the group used 1989 land cover/land use data to establish baseline conditions and then identified its desired conditions using the same classifications. Goals for Pool 5 including restoring over 5,000 acres of agricultural land to floodplain vegetation, increasing emergent and submergent vegetation in the Weaver Bottoms area, creating a configuration of islands similar to what existed in the 1940s, accounting for the process of delta formation, and increasing overwintering areas for fish. Techniques for achieving these goals could include land acquisition, conservation easements, summer drawdowns, and dredging. Schlagenhaft emphasized that this Pool 5 plan would be pursued under the full range of available programs and authorities. After completing its pool plans, the FWWG also will prepare a river reach document that describes the commonalities among the pool plans.

Schlagenhaft said the FWWG views its pool planning effort as complementing the HNA. He noted that the Query Tool will be quite useful in identifying the best opportunities to accomplish the goals identified in the pool plans. Terry Moe asked how the public will be involved in the FWWG's pool planning efforts. Schlagenhaft said the group is considering two approaches, one of which involves consulting the public at the outset and the other of which calls for managers to prepare a draft pool plan and then seek public comment.

Mike Thompson said the pool planning approach described by Schlagenhaft should be very useful in HREP planning. Bob Clevenstine reported that MVR's Fish and Wildlife Interagency Committee (FWIC) will also be developing pool plans. Clevenstine said he anticipates that the effort will result in a recommended sequence of actions based on ecological needs. The recommended sequence will also reflect the logical interrelationships among the steps (e.g., spawning areas and overwintering habitat may need to be created in tandem if both are in short supply).

Schlagenhaft noted that some pool plan goals will involve construction activities such as dredging and island creation. Other goals will require acquisition of land or easements. He said acquisition opportunities are generally unpredictable and relatively infrequent. For example, there is often significant interest following a flood, but then little interest after people have invested time and money in recovering from the flood. In contrast, most habitat construction activities can be planned well in advance and deferred if necessary with relatively little impact. Given these considerations, Schlagenhaft emphasized the importance of maintaining flexibility in programs and being ready to put money into acquisition when opportunities present themselves. Kevin Szcodronski concurred with Schlagenhaft's observations, citing Iowa's experience with the fish and wildlife mitigation program on the Missouri River. According to Szcodronski, this program involves both construction and acquisition, but acquisition opportunities have tended to come in waves, typically following floods. Szcodronski observed that it can frequently take quite some time to accumulate sufficient land or easements to allow habitat construction activities.

Steve Johnson emphasized that creativity and the flexibility to combine multiple programs are key to implementing a pool vision. Dusty Rhodes said the Corps could accomplish some work under its Comprehensive Plan authority. However, he noted that there is no general Corps authority to acquire land. Marvin Hubbell said Corps policy changes should help the states get credit for land acquired prior to execution of a project cooperation agreement. He urged the Corps to take a broad view in defining what is part of a project, thereby permitting credit for

land purchases that may predate the project by several years. Leo Foley said the Corps is reviewing the issues related to credit for lands and will strive for a clear and consistent policy. Al Fenedick encouraged the EMP partners to explore opportunities to work with FEMA and other agencies and groups that have not typically been involved in HREPs. Regarding public involvement in pool planning, Fenedick recommended involving people early in the process and making the purpose of the effort clear to them.

Long Term Resource Monitoring Program

Leo Foley introduced Scott Whitney, the Corps' new LTRMP coordinator. Whitney said his goal is to establish the LTRMP as the nation's premier partnership effort in environmental research. He said he will strive to increase connections between the LTRMP and the users of its data. He also stressed the importance of writing SOWs that clearly identify expectations, including what will be done and how it will be applied. According to Whitney, overtarget work will become a more important part of the LTRMP. Rather than increasing the size of the base program, he advocated structuring the LTRMP so that it has the flexibility to respond to information needs through overtarget projects.

Whitney said the FY 01 LTRMP SOWs are in good shape. He acknowledged that there will have to be difficult choices if funding falls below the baseline target and also observed that there is increasing competition for funds within the Corps. Leslie Holland-Bartels said this year's process for developing the SOWs has worked well. She noted that the SOWs for both baseline and overtarget work include clear expectations and identify all tasks that are part of multi-year efforts.

Terry Moe announced that John Wetzel will be retiring early in 2001. Moe noted that Wetzel has been a Wisconsin DNR wildlife manager on the Mississippi River for many years. He recounted Wetzel's key contributions to Wisconsin's LTRMP field station and to interagency coordination, particularly the A-Team. Moe said John Sullivan, Wisconsin DNR's Mississippi River water quality specialist, will be replacing Wetzel on the A-Team. Moe said Sullivan will add important new scientific perspectives to the A-Team and encouraged other program partners to consider the range of expertise represented on the team.

Other Business

Barb Naramore announced that future EMP-CC meetings will be held on November 16 in St. Louis, March 1 in the Twin Cities, and May 16 in La Crosse. [Note: The location of the May 16 meeting was subsequently changed to Davenport.] The UMRBA will meet on the preceding day in each of these locations.

Terry Moe requested that future Corps Activity Reports highlight changes from the previous report. Moe also noted that there have been operability issues with the pump features of some projects, including Bay Island, Princeton, and Chautauqua. He requested a report from the three districts on their water level management projects, including information on costs, dependability, and project outcomes. Leo Foley noted that water level management projects were discussed extensively at the last HREP engineering workshop. Foley also observed that the contracts let to address operability issues have typically been quite small. Because they are designed to achieve the goals of the original DPR, these contracts do not require a new DPR.

Moe also asked about the Cuivre Island prop wash experiment referenced in the Activity Report. Mike Thompson explained that the experiment is a relatively small project feature and is part of the approved DPR. The experiment will involve running a towboat through a small chute to assess its effects on resuspension of accreted sediment. Moe questioned the appropriateness of doing this experiment as part of an EMP habitat project. Thompson estimated the cost of the experiment at \$10,000 or \$15,000. Dusty Rhodes noted that the experiment is not precedent-setting and is relatively inexpensive. Moe said he opposed the use of EMP funds for such work in principle.

Rhodes referenced his pending retirement and thanked the EMP-CC members for their contributions to the EMP. He expressed appreciation for people's professionalism and commitment to the program.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.